806 GROWTH

WHERE 806 BUSINESSES GROW.

A Plain-English Growth Guide *for Local Business Owners.*

The most common reasons local businesses lose customers — and the practical steps to fix them.

PRACTICAL · FOCUSED · RESULTS-DRIVEN

SEVEN CHAPTERS · ONE SITTING

BEFORE YOU READ

Built for the owner who's *tired of marketing fluff.*

This isn't another marketing guide. You've probably heard enough of those — the kind that sounds smart in the room and means nothing on Monday morning.

No case studies pulled from some other market. No strategies built for companies with a full marketing team. No promises about what's possible if you just trust the system.

What's here is straightforward: the most common reasons local businesses lose customers they should be keeping, and practical steps to fix them. Some of it you'll already know. Some of it might shift how you've been looking at something.

It's a short read — seven chapters. You can get through the whole thing in one sitting. But if you're skimming, and most people will be, each chapter stands on its own. Jump to whatever feels most relevant to where your business is right now.

ABOUT 806 GROWTH

This was put together by 806 Growth — a marketing and growth company based in Lubbock, Texas. We work with West Texas business owners who want honest answers and practical help. If anything in here raises a question about your specific situation, you'll find ways to reach us at the end.

Alright. Let's get into it.

SEVEN CHAPTERS

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The nine PM Tuesday decision — and the forty-five-second filter you're being judged by.

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CHAPTER ONE

How Customers *Actually Decide.*

The nine PM Tuesday decision.

It's nine PM on a Tuesday. Someone needs something — a repair, a checkup, a reservation, a problem they've finally stopped putting off. They're on their phone. They're tired. They're not in research mode.

They're in *just-pick-someone mode.*

Google pulls up a handful of names. They're not reading carefully — they're scanning. Looking for the first option that feels safe enough to move forward with.

Here's what's actually running through their head, in about forty-five seconds.

01	**Recognition**	*Have I heard of these people before?*
02	**Legitimacy**	*Does this look like a real, active business?*
03	**Clarity**	*Can I figure out what they do and where they are — without digging?*
04	**Social Proof**	*Are other people saying good things, or is it just the business talking?*
05	**Ease**	*How hard is it to take the next step right now?*

That's the whole filter. **Trust, clarity, speed, ease.** In that order. In under a minute.

They're asking one quiet question: *does this feel like the obvious choice?* If yes, they move. If not, they scroll.

Now here's the part that catches most owners off guard.

> *You're not losing to better competitors.*
> *You're losing to easier ones.*

The shop down the street may not be more skilled than you. They may not have better work, more experience, or a stronger reputation in this community. But in that forty-five-second window, they were easier to say yes to.

That's a hard thing to sit with when you've spent years building something real.

But it's also good news. *Easier to say yes to* is something you can fix. It doesn't take a bigger ad budget. It doesn't take starting over. It just takes finding the specific places where customers quietly lose confidence and move on.

Those places have names. And most businesses are leaking from the same four of them.

Let's go find yours. The next chapter walks through the four places local businesses quietly lose customers — and the simple math behind why it adds up faster than you'd think.

CHAPTER TWO

The Four Leaks That Quietly *Cost You Jobs.*

Most businesses don't lose customers dramatically. There's no viral bad review. No public fallout. No single moment you can point to.

They lose them quietly. A few here, a few there. Customers who almost called. Almost came back. Almost referred someone.

There are four places this happens — and they show up in nearly every local business we've looked at.

- *Leak One* —**The Missed Call.**

  Someone called. Nobody answered. They moved on.

  That's it. No drama. They didn't leave a message — people rarely do anymore. They just went to the next name on the list. If your phone goes unanswered during busy hours, after hours, or on weekends — you're not just missing calls. You're missing the customers who were already ready to say yes.

- *Leak Two* —**The Slow Response.**

  They filled out your contact form. Sent a Facebook message. Fired off a quick email. You got back to them the next morning. By then, they'd already booked someone else.

  Speed isn't about being available every second. It's about understanding that a customer who reaches out is often choosing between you and whoever responds first. Hours feel like days when someone's trying to make a decision.

- *Leak Three* —**Weak or Stale Reviews.**

  Reviews aren't just stars on a screen. They're the first thing a stranger uses to decide if you're trustworthy. If your last review is from fourteen months ago, that stranger doesn't think *this business is consistent.* They think *I wonder if they're still open.*

  You don't need hundreds. You need recent. You need real.

- *Leak Four —* **The Forgotten Customer.**

  Someone bought from you. Had a good experience. Life moved on — and you never contacted them again. They didn't leave. You just never gave them a reason to come back. Or a reason to refer someone.

Existing customers are the lowest-cost, highest-trust source of new revenue most businesses have. And most businesses aren't working that list at all.

> SIMPLE MATH · FOR ILLUSTRATION ONLY
>
> Say a business gets forty inquiries a month. They miss or respond too slowly to twenty-five percent of them — that's ten lost opportunities. If the average job is worth three hundred dollars...
>
> **$3,000 / month**
>
> *walking out the door quietly. Not because of bad work. Because of slow systems.*

Here's the thing about these four leaks. None of them are about the quality of your work. They're all about what happens *before* a customer experiences your work — and *after.*

That window — before they ever meet you — is where most of the decision gets made.

So let's actually look at it. Second by second. The next chapter walks through the first ninety seconds a stranger spends forming an opinion about your business — entirely on their phone, without any input from you.

CHAPTER THREE

The First *Ninety Seconds.*

What your customer sees before they ever call.

Before a customer calls you, texts you, or walks through your door — they've already formed an opinion.

Not a final one. But a strong first one. And it happened in about ninety seconds, entirely on their phone, without any input from you.

This is the part of your business most owners never actually look at. Not because they don't care — but because they're busy *running* the business. Not experiencing it the way a stranger would.

So let's walk through what that window actually looks like.

First — can they find you at all?

It starts with a search. Your business name, or maybe just a category. *Roofer near me. Bookkeeper in Lubbock. Best place for whatever you do.*

What comes up is your Google Business Profile — the box with your name, address, hours, phone number, photos, and star rating. Most people never make it past that box. If the information there is wrong, or outdated, or thin — customers don't dig deeper. They move to the next result.

One thing worth knowing: AI tools like ChatGPT and Google's AI summaries now pull from this same public information when someone asks for a recommendation. So what's on your profile shapes what those tools say about you, too.

Second — do they trust you enough to reach out?

They found you. Now they're deciding. First stop is your reviews — not just the star rating, the recency. A 4.8 with the last review eight months ago reads differently than a 4.6 with reviews from last week.

Next, your photos. Blurry images, stock photos, or none at all send the wrong message. Then — if they're still interested — they tap your website. And finally, the call or text button. If it doesn't work, or no one answers, the decision is over.

That whole sequence — ninety seconds, start to finish. Most of it happens before you even know they exist.

TRY THIS · RIGHT NOW

The Ninety-Second Test.

Open your phone, go to Google, and search your own business name like a stranger would. Then ask yourself:

- Does my profile come up?
- Is the information accurate — hours, phone, address?
- Do I have photos that look like a real, active business?
- When did my last review come in?
- Does my website load quickly on my phone?
- Is it obvious in five seconds what I do?
- Does the call button actually work?
- Is contact info easy to find?

If you hit a *no* — or even an *I'm not sure* — anywhere in that list, that's a friction point. And friction is where customers quietly exit.

Fixing the first ninety seconds captures the customers you're already attracting, but not converting.

But there's another group entirely. People you don't need to attract at all. They already know you. They've already paid you. And most businesses haven't said a word to them since.

CHAPTER FOUR

The Customer List You *Forgot You Had.*

Most businesses focus on getting new leads. That makes sense — growth requires new customers. But there's a step that usually gets skipped.

Capturing the value that's already sitting right in front of you. If your follow-up is leaking, new leads will leak too. You can't fix that by pouring more water into a bucket with holes in it.

Your past customers are the patch.

A past customer already trusts you. They've seen your work. They handed you money and felt okay about it. Getting them to come back — or refer someone — requires no ad spend, no waiting, no starting from scratch. Just a short, honest message to someone who already has a reason to say yes.

Old quotes work the same way. Someone asked, you gave them a number, and life happened. That's not a dead lead. That's someone who already raised their hand. Most just need a simple nudge.

The reason this rarely happens isn't that owners don't want to do it. It's that it never feels like the right time. And writing the message feels harder than it actually is.

So here are four you can send today. Adjust the name, the service, the tone. Make them sound like you.

SCRIPT ONE · THE CHECK-IN

Two to four weeks after you wrap a job.

No agenda. Just a touchpoint.

> *"Hey [Name] — just checking in to make sure everything's still looking good after we wrapped up. Let me know if you ever need anything. We appreciate your business."*

SCRIPT TWO · THE OLD-QUOTE FOLLOW-UP

A quote sent a couple weeks back, no response yet.

You're not chasing them. You're just clearing the air.

> *"Hey [Name] — I sent over a quote a couple weeks back and wanted to check if you had any questions, or if things changed on your end. No pressure either way — just didn't want to leave you hanging."*

SCRIPT THREE · THE REVIEW ASK

Right after a job that went well.

While the good feeling is still fresh.

> *"Hey [Name] — really glad we could get that taken care of for you. If you have two minutes, a Google review would mean a lot to us. Here's the link: [link]. Thank you."*

SCRIPT FOUR · THE REFERRAL ASK

For a repeat customer, or someone clearly happy.

You're not asking a favor. You're inviting them in.

> *"Hey [Name] — we really value customers like you. If you ever know someone who needs [what you do], we'd love the introduction. We take care of referrals the same way we take care of you."*

Short. Human. No pressure. If even two or three land this week, you'll have real return from zero ad spend. The next chapter is about doing this work faster — without sounding like a robot.

CHAPTER FIVE

The Free Tool You're *Probably Using Wrong.*

ChatGPT, and the formula most people skip.

Most people use ChatGPT like Google. They type in a quick question, get a generic answer, decide it's not that useful, and close the tab. That's not a tool problem. It's a setup problem.

ChatGPT isn't a search engine. It's closer to a capable assistant that will do exactly what you ask — no more, no less. The quality of what comes out depends almost entirely on the quality of what you put in.

> THE FORMULA
>
> ***Role + Goal + Context + Constraints + Example***
>
> **Role** — *tells the AI how to think. "Act as a customer service writer for a local business."*
> **Goal** — *tells it what you want. "Write a follow-up message to a customer."*
> **Context** — *gives it the situation. "The customer got a quote two weeks ago and hasn't responded."*
> **Constraints** — *shape the output. "Keep it short, casual, no pressure."*
> **Example** — *gives it a starting point. "Something like: Hey there, just checking in..."*

You don't need all five every time. But the more context you give, the less editing you'll do on the back end.

This formula works with whatever AI writing tool you're already using — ChatGPT, Claude, Gemini, or anything else. These all fall under the same umbrella: *large language models.* Different names, same basic idea.

Here are three prompts you can use tomorrow. Copy them, fill in the blanks, and adjust from there.

PROMPT ONE · FOLLOW-UP MESSAGE

"Act as a friendly local business owner. Write a short follow-up text to a customer who received a quote for [service] about two weeks ago and hasn't responded. Keep it casual, no pressure, under three sentences. Don't sound salesy."

PROMPT TWO · WEEKLY POST PLAN

"Act as a social media helper for a local [type of business] in [city]. Give me five simple post ideas for this week — things that would feel real and useful to local customers. Not promotional. No hashtag overload, no corporate tone."

PROMPT THREE · SERVICE DESCRIPTION

"Act as a copywriter for a local service business. Write a short three-to-four sentence description of [your service] for [type of customer]. Focus on the problem it solves, not the technical details. Plain language. No fluff."

Each of these will give you something eighty percent usable in under a minute. The other twenty percent is you — making it sound like yourself. Which is always worth doing.

⚠ ONE QUICK PRIVACY NOTE

Don't paste real customer names, phone numbers, emails, or personal details into any AI tool. Use placeholders like [Name] or [Customer] instead. Free AI tools are not private environments — and it's a habit worth building from the start.

Once you've got messages going out, and AI helping you produce them faster, the next question is the one most owners actually lose sleep over. Is any of this even working?

CHAPTER SIX

How to Tell If Your Marketing *Is Working.*

A lot of business owners feel uneasy about their marketing, but can't explain why. The reports look busy. The numbers go up. But the phone doesn't ring any differently than it did before.

That's not always a coincidence. Some metrics tell you whether your business is growing. Others just tell you that something happened online. Knowing the difference is how you stop paying for the appearance of progress.

Vanity metrics measure attention — impressions, followers, reach, likes. Attention is fine. But it doesn't pay your bills.

Business metrics connect to actual revenue — calls, form fills, booked appointments, repeat customers, referrals. These are the numbers worth watching.

METRIC	WHAT IT MEANS	WHY IT MATTERS
Calls & Contacts	People who reached out directly.	*The most direct sign of interest.*
Cost Per Lead	What you paid per inquiry.	*Tells you if the spend makes sense.*
Conversion Rate	Inquiries that turned into jobs.	*Reveals follow-up and trust gaps.*
Repeat Customer Rate	How often past customers come back.	*Signals satisfaction and loyalty.*
Review Velocity	How often new reviews come in.	*Affects both trust and visibility.*
Revenue Per Month	What actually came in.	*The only number that settles debates.*

You don't need to track all of these obsessively. But you should know at least three of them off the top of your head at any given time.

Four Red Flags Worth Listening For.

When you're working with a marketing agency or vendor.

- ***They can't explain results in plain English.***

  If the monthly report requires a decoder ring, and they can't give you a one-paragraph summary of what's working — that's a signal.

- ***The metrics never include leads or revenue.***

  Impressions and reach are easy to produce. Actual business results are harder. If you're only seeing the easy numbers, ask why.

- ***The goalposts keep moving.***

  This month was about brand awareness. Next month it's building momentum. If there's never a clear point at which you'd know it's working — that's not a strategy. That's a stall.

- ***You feel awkward asking questions.***

  You should never feel like a nuisance for wanting to understand where your money is going. A straightforward vendor welcomes the question.

None of this means marketing doesn't work. It means accountability matters. And you're allowed to expect it.

Knowing what to measure is half the battle. The other half is having a rhythm that actually keeps you doing it. So here's the simplest version of that rhythm I can give you.

CHAPTER SEVEN

Your Sixty-Minute *Monday Morning Fix.*

You don't need a new strategy. You need a short, repeatable habit.

Everything in this guide comes down to a few simple actions, done consistently. This routine pulls them together into one morning, once a week. Sixty minutes total. No new tools. No complicated systems. Six blocks. Ten minutes each.

01 — 10	**Check missed calls and unread messages.** Return anything from last week that didn't get a response. One follow-up is worth more than an hour of planning.
11 — 20	**Pull up your Google Business Profile.** Make sure your hours, phone number, and info are accurate. Add a photo from last week's work if you have one. Two minutes of upkeep beats a stale profile.
21 — 30	**Send one message to a past customer.** A check-in, a quote follow-up, a review ask, or a referral ask. Pick one name. Use the scripts from Chapter Four. Send it before you talk yourself out of it.
31 — 40	**Look at your three business numbers.** Calls received. Leads converted. Revenue for the week. You don't need a dashboard — a notes app or a napkin will do. Just know your numbers.
41 — 50	**Write or schedule one piece of content.** A post. A photo. A short update. Use the ChatGPT prompts from Chapter Five if you're stuck. Done is better than perfect.
51 — 60	**Identify one thing to fix this week.** One leak. One friction point. One small improvement. Write it down. Put it somewhere you'll see it.

> *The businesses that grow consistently aren't doing more than everyone else. **They're doing the right things — without stopping.***

WHAT NOW

You made it through the whole *guide.*

That already puts you ahead of most.

The question now isn't whether you learned something. It's what you do with it. One small action taken today is worth more than a perfect plan that starts next month.

The owners who grow aren't the ones with the biggest budget, the fanciest plan, or the loudest agency. They're the ones who pick one thing — and start. That can be today.

01

Get a Free Assessment.

Not sure where to start? We'll look at your specific business — where you're leaking, what's worth fixing first, and what's realistic given where you are. No obligation, no pressure.

806growth.com

02

Learn AI for Your Business.

If Chapter Five sparked something and you want to go deeper, head to 806 AI Academy. Practical training. No tech background needed.

806aiacademy.com

03

Just Have a Conversation.

Got a question about marketing or growing your business? Reach out. We're local, we're straight, and we actually answer.

806growth.com

Thanks for reading. Built to help your business grow.

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